



May 19, 2011

Housing and Community Development Committee
City of Houston
City Hall Council Chambers
901 Bagby, 2nd Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

Dear Members of Houston City Council:

We cannot thank you enough for your support in allowing us the opportunity to submit this application for your review. The Men's Center is an organization that has quietly been around for 52 years and has successfully helped thousands of homeless men begin their recovery from substance abuse and return to society as productive members. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless and our own testimony to its truth: Breaking an addiction is difficult for anyone, especially for substance abusers who are homeless; Without a social support network, recovering from a substance addiction is very difficult, and even if they do break their addictions, they may have difficulty remaining sober while living on the streets where substances are so widely used.

Substance abuse is a treatable disease and it takes a number of different approaches to reach those who suffer. The Men's Center provides non-medical detoxification and rehabilitation for men, almost all of whom were previously homeless and have experienced prior treatment. When homeless men walk through our doors, usually after a life ravaged by drugs and alcohol abuse, they require more time to heal than provided in a typical treatment setting. The Men's Center allows them that time. Here, they are provided with three meals a day and a clean, sober, supportive living environment. We have an onsite support staff of 21, all of whom overcame homelessness and succeed in maintaining their sobriety. Their 24-hour support and direction help others to overcome what they themselves have experienced. For many, we are their last hope.

In addition to the support by Council Member James Rodriguez, The Men's Center has close relationships and collaborates with many area agencies and organizations to provide referrals and additional services to our residents.

- Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County – refers many clients to our organization so that they can continue on their road to recovery and work more closely with their addiction-related issues (within walking distance);
- Shepherd's Center, A Ministry of Main Street Ministries Houston – refers many clients to us and offers strong spiritual and community assistance to our residents (within walking distance);

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- Memorial Hermann Prevention & Recovery Center Behavioral Health Services – has supported our organization financially and with in-kind medical services for over seven years;
- Harris County Hospital District – provides access to primary and specialty care services for our homeless population;
- Houston Food Bank – provides the food we need to serve our residents three meals a day;
- SEARCH – provides healthcare and employment services as well as other programs to our population (within walking distance);
- Career and Recovery Services – helps our residents to identify and overcome barriers to employment through a wide array of services (within walking distance);
- Houston Police Department – refers and brings many homeless men to our organization for help.

Our current facilities have been well-used throughout the years and are showing signs of serious decay. With your approved funding, The Men's Center will be able to begin construction on a new 4-story residential facility on vacant land that we already own. During the construction phase, no residents will be displaced and services will not be interrupted. These planned improvements will significantly enhance the surrounding community, increase our capacity by 23% and sustain our ability to continue serving this segment of the population.

We sincerely appreciate your time in reviewing our project and look forward to any questions or concerns you may have. Please let us provide you with a tour of our facilities and properties to better understand what we mean to the community.

Sincerely,

Alan G. Woodbury

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President of the Board